INSIDE
Movies, D3
Comics, D4-D5
Television, D7

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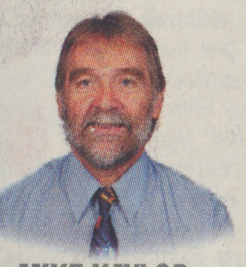

MIKE KAYLOR
Nightlife

aint tea room ngs to city ebration of tish high tea

high time Huntsvillians rned to celebrate tea e, and Martyn Douglas is eading the message.
e Best of British Shop ea Room opened about eeks ago off Whitesburg on the Franklin Street the old Big Brothers ry building. A smaller n of the store first red about a year ago in a at the far south end of sburg.
uglas is owner and usual- host of tea time at Best tish. He and his wife, e, came from England to ville about eight years hen both were offered Alabama – he as an an priest and she as a sor of genetics research. ey couldn't find the pas- nd foodstuffs they were o in Britain, so the cou- cided to import merchan- nd open a small store in Huntsville. Also, after ved to Huntsville, Dou- mall Anglican church to splinter.
at's when I realized I d to find something else," d. "You never know when ngregation says they've nough of you and off they off you go."
nce was born The Best of n Shop and Tea Room. as continues to be rector ly Trinity Anglican h, but his congregation arge enough to pay a full- alary.
tea room is open from

Dave Dieter/Huntsville Times

Dymaxion Lee (Marc Elliott), and Secret Asian Man (Santanu Mitra) are members of the band Daikaiju.

Monster wave of sound

Daikaiju (die'-kie'-joo): 1. A compound word that translates to "giant monster" formed by the Japanese words "dai" meaning great or giant and 'kaiju' meaning monster or mysterious beast; 2. An independent band of operatives that combines unique talents to create high-energy instrumental "giant monster" music."

Masked men mix surf music, Japanese flair

By CHRIS WELCH
Times Entertainment Writer
chrisw@htimes.com

The guys in the band Daikaiju play surf music, but take a quick glance at them in *The Times'* photo and something jumps right at ya – these guys aren't anything like the Beach Boys.

Nope, not even Brian Wilson is out there like this.

How far out there?

If you take Japanese science fiction movies, cross them with high-energy loud rock, and throw in the traditional kabuki-noh masks of Japanese theater, what do you have?

Godzilla on caffeine?

KISS on sushi?

"This powerhouse instrumental surf-rock quartet hails from Huntsville, Ala.,

Please see **SOUND** *on* **D3**

The details

What: Daikaiju in concert with The Pine Hill Haints
When: Sunday 10 p.m.
Where: Crossroads Cafe, Marketsquare Shopping Center
How much? $6 for 19 and over, $4 for 21 and over

CLAY BROUSSARD
Music Beat

Refined Brit brings well-articulated touch of class to local symphony

Yo! It's time for some cultcha! Yeah, that's right, I'm talkin' to you. Put down that Nelly CD and put on your tux – we're going to the symphony, because it's gettin' hot in there.

Huntsville Symphony Orchestra Executive Director Bob Crook had contacted me a few weeks back and extended an open invitation to pop in any time, or at least that's how I read it. So, feeling rather troglodytic and in need of an art fix, I decided on the spur of the moment to drop in on last Friday's rehearsals for Saturday's concert, which featured selections by Delius, Strauss and Berlioz.

This is going to be a great season for the HSO. As you know, they are searching for a new conductor to replace Maestro Taavo Virkhaus, who is stepping aside at the end of this season after 14 magnificent years at the helm. The five finalists are guest-conducting this season, and Friday night I got to see David Wroe, music director of the Westfield, N.J., Symphony Orchestra, in action.

Wroe's resume is impressive: A native of England, Wroe graduated from Manchester University and North-

Please see **CLAY** *on* **D2**

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Daikaiju plays Sunday night at Crossroads Cafe starting at 10

Sound

Continued from page **D1**

where they musta been sniffing fumes from the local Space & Rocket Center when they recorded their amp-blastin' demo disc," according to a review in the Atlanta publication *Creative Loafing.*

You can come to your own conclusions Sunday night when the group plays at Crossroads Cafe starting around 10.

Daikaiju, originally called The Grizzly Sharks when it formed in 1999, is based in Huntsville and consists of four masked men — the Secret Asian Man (Santanu Mitra) and Dymaxion Lee (Marc Elliott) on guitars, Brain Conflict (Brian Murphree) on bass guitar, and Mr. Nein (Milburn Łominick) on drums. Together, they create a brand of experimental surf rock that incorporates a wide variety of musical styles including punk, reggae, ska, psychedelic and progressive rock.

In February 2001, the band released an EP titled "Monster Surf" on its independent label, Migoto Radiation. In February of this year, the band released "The Phasing Spider Menace," on which three of the tracks were recorded live at Crossroads Cafe. The band's description of its music sounds real edgy and and certainly is, but when you listen to the music it sounds vaguely familiar, like something you might have heard on one of those TV action shows in the '60s or '70s.

Members of the group, who like to maintain their cloak of mystery by using their stage names, describe their music as "the greatest monster movie never made."

They also said it's "compelling melodies, hard-hitting riffs and shifting dynamics fused together to create songs that immerse the listener in a strange universe of giant monsters, super spies, mad scientists, martial artists and alien invasions."

Sounds like they've been watching too many of those campy Japanese films, and in fact, Secret Asian Man says his favorite movie is "Godzilla, King of the Monsters," and Dymaxion Lee likes "Gamera III."

"When we were kids, we were drawn to the huge, giant monsters causing mayhem and destruction," Dymaxion Lee said. "It sparked my imagination because it was unlike anything in American culture."

Surf's up . . . sort of

Yep, it sounds strange, but their concept of music really isn't. Some of the hipper members of the older generation and many Generation Xers already know about surf music played by the likes of Duane Eddy, The Ventures and Dick Dale in the early 1950s and '60s.

Where vocal groups like Jan and Dean and the Beach Boys sang about surfing, instrumental surf bands create the sensation of actually surfing. Vocal surf music deals with the lifestyle associated with the surf scene, but instrumental surf music is about confronting the elements.

OK, so what's wrong with this picture?

Well, at last check, the surf wasn't up in Huntsville, right? That may explain why Daikaiju is the only band playing surf rock in the state and one of the few in the South. Understandably, most surf rock bands are near the East and West Coasts.

"Yeah, it's hard to find surf in Alabama," Dymaxion Lee admitted, "but that's not necessarily important. It's sort of taking on a life of its own around here with the underground culture."

"Actually, it's helped us develop a new — really our own — sound," Secret Asian Man said.

And thanks to the Internet, the band has gained exposure via its sites on mp3.com (mp3.com/daikaiju) and vitaminic.com. Songs like "Attack of the Crab Women," "Farewell to Monster Island — Live" and others have topped the mp3.com surf music charts as well as the Alabama state music charts. Mp3.com has featured "Route Nowhere" on a compilation titled "Road Trip Tunes."

Their songs are also being featured on three upcoming projects. The band has done a cover of the Diamonds' "Little Darlin' " on the "American Graffiti Revisited" album released by OmOm Music (omomworld.com) based in Italy. "Showdown in Shinjuku" will appear this spring on on a video release by Studio Kaiju documenting the latest exploits of the Boston-based live monster wrestling spectacle, Kaiju Big Battel. And, "Farewell to Monster Island" will appear on a new body-surfing video project by acclaimed body-boarding videographer Tom Boyle and filmmaker Tom Lynch.

The group also plans its second European tour Nov. 8-23 in Holland, Belgium and Switzerland. After that, the group hopes to record a full-length album.

As you might guess, it's hard for Daikaiju to find places to play around here. The band has played at Crossroads, Club Vinyl and Bandito Burrito, but hopes to find more local venues. "If you're not blues, rock or rockabilly, it's hard to find a place," Secret Asian Man said.

Sun Burst Records on Holmes Avenue carries the band's albums, and they can also be found on its Web site, daikiju.net.

HUNTSVILLE'S #1
KARAOKE COMPETITION
12 Week Contest begins Sunday September 8, 2002
Competition Begins at 9:00 p.m.
Winner receives over $2,000 in Cash and Prizes
$500.00 in Cash
A $1200.00 Recording Session to produce your own Record Hotel Accommodations for two nights while recording!
Star on TV Weekly!
Each week you can star on a local TV Show being produced by Audio Video Pros and Hoppers Bar and Grill
Half Price Appetizers beginning at 8:30 pm • Enjoy Karaoke and Dance with the music of the Party Pros...
Hopper's BAR & GRILL
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